COLLECTING AIRMAIL



American Air Mail Society

Collecting Airmail

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Welcome to Collecting Airmail

Cheryl Ganz

Airmail collectors, or aerophilatelists, come from all walks of life throughout the world. They all share a passion for aviation and its impact on worldwide communications. Many are pilots, work in the aircraft industry, serve in aviation in the armed forces, or have other direct connections to flight. Others were stamp collectors as children and returned to philately, now seeking a specialty that offers new challenges and knowledge. Some are advanced philatelists of a specific country who wish to research the rates and usages of the airmail stamps of their area of specialization. Yet others began collecting coins or postcards or antiques and discovered that in airmail collecting there is a greater opportunity to meet fellow collectors, exhibit collections, write about discoveries, and share enthusiasm. Museum curators and aviation history buffs find new approaches to their subjects in aerophilately. Whatever influences you toward collecting airmail, you will find great rewards; this area of concentration offers plenty of room for you to create a specialization that is tied to your interests or pursuits. This is a hobby full of fun and great, creative people!

Collecting Airmail was designed to help you enter the field of airmail collecting by having leading American aerophilatelists write about their own collecting interests. The authors share a passion for aerophilately, and together we hope these essays offer an overview of airmail collecting and an inspiration to novice collectors seeking expanded horizons.

Have a great time as you pilot your way through *Collecting Airmail*. The contents in this guide offer only an introduction to the possibilities of airmail collecting. The sky is the limit! Use your imagination. The members of the American Air Mail Society hope to meet you soon during one of your layovers!

Front Cover:
Detail from an embossed air post stamped envelope. This stationery series was issued from 1929-1944.

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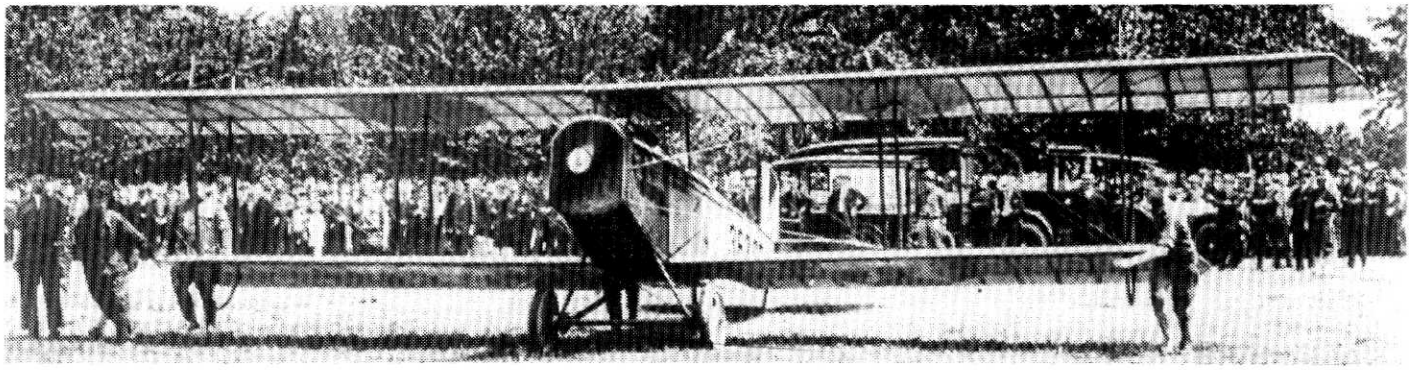
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Preparing for Take Off

What is Airmail?

James W. Graue

One could make a winning case for aviation as the greatest achievement of the 20th century. With flight came the instant realization that with it went communications. Freed from the inherent constraints of all modes of surface travel, communications transported by air – airmail – provided a quantum leap in the advance of mail delivery, and with it the pace of all facets of human life.

Airmail is the philatelic and postal historical reflection of the development of aviation and its effect on world communications. Consider the development of aviation itself and one can find it reflected in the mail that was flown:

The path . . .
the limited flights of the pioneers, with special demonstration flights sanctioned to carry souvenir "airmail," whose successes inspired . . .

The development of aircraft in all forms, becoming increasingly fast, range-capable, and reliable, thereby making possible . . .

The air carriers, from regional to national, international, intercontinental, and transoceanic; and at every step, from the hesitant first to the confident final, there was – airmail!

Airmail, the actual flown documents, is the foundation of aerophilately. It was not always the standard that it is today, but a premium service requiring the payment of special postage rates, often reflected in the airmail stamps that have been issued world-wide since early in the game. Special airmail markings applied to the airmail, the transit times reflected in dispatch and arrival postmarks, and the airmail postage rates all indicate the means of flight and the route taken. The world for the airmail collector is as wide and deep as one wishes to make it. The choice is unlimited. Consider . . .

- The development of the early routes, continuously being extended to reach new regions, nations, and continents.
- The major efforts made to advance airmail delivery by hours or even minutes.
- The contributions of the Zeppelins and flying boats, aviation dinosaurs which made transoceanic airmail a reality before land-based airplanes had that capability.
- The evolution of air transport service networks, interconnecting with one another to cover the world.

The world of airmail, all of which is a product of less than one century, offers the collector almost limitless choice. Much of it is yet untapped, still waiting to challenge the initiative and creativity of an airmail collector – an aerophilatelist!

For further insights into this fascinating world of philately, read on . . .✈

Above:
Taking off with the mail in Washington, D.C. on May 15, 1918. (National Postal Museum, Smithsonian Institution)

Collecting Covers

Jonathan L. Johnson, Jr.

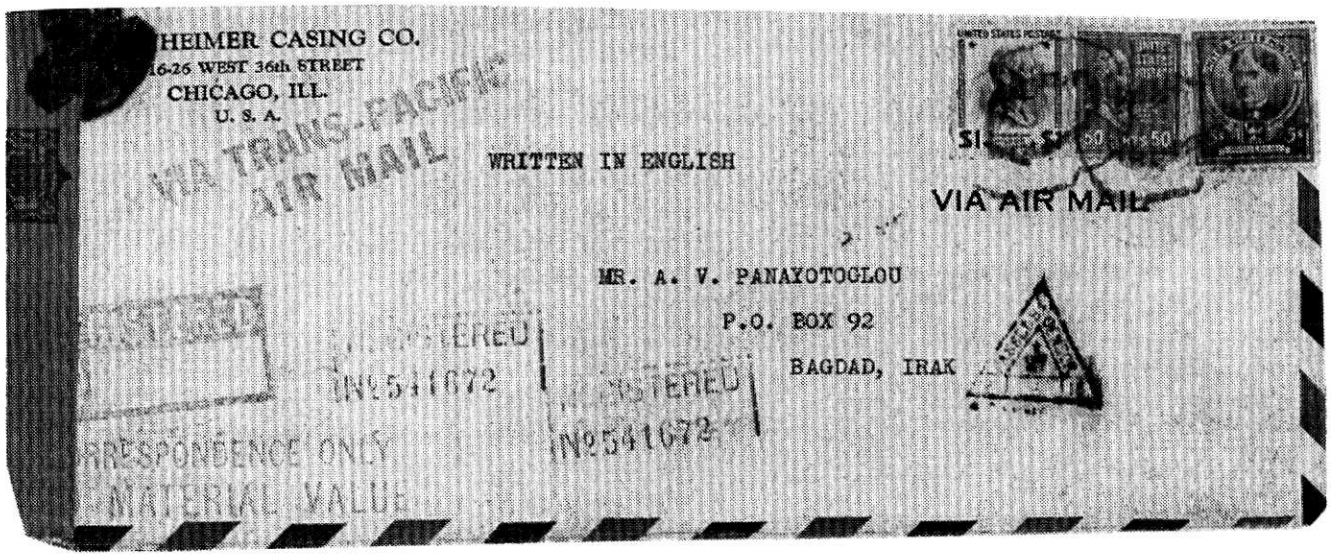
Cover collecting is a wide open field and an extension of stamp collecting. A "cover" is an envelope that has seen postal service. Many have "cachets," a rubber stamped or printed impression or label placed on the cover descriptive of the event for which it was mailed. Collecting airmail covers can be as

inexpensive as the price of postage to service pictorial cancellations or as expensive as the purchase price of a famous rarity, such as a piece of surviving *Hindenburg* crash mail. Start with a limited objective, pick a category, and collect. You may change your direction along the way or discover new airmail areas of interest.

Routes, rates, cities, states, countries, first days, special events, pilot autographs, and markings are all desirable areas of cover collecting. Some covers may be flown, while others may note a special event, such as an airport dedication. Covers for your collection may be found in dealer stocks at stamp exhibitions and bourses, by mail from established dealers, in club and public philatelic auctions, in exchange with other collectors, and through ads in the philatelic press. Joining the American Air Mail Society is a way to obtain information on these sources.

Postal history or commercial airmail cover collecting is an enjoyable aspect of the hobby. Here you can learn routes, rates, and how airlines developed. The *American Air Mail Catalogue* provides resource information as well as potential areas of interest. The many AAMS publications, chapters, and study groups are all ready to help you and receive your input as you study stamps and markings on airmail covers. ✈

Below:
Posted July 7, 1941, Chicago, flown to San Francisco, placed on board one of the Pan American Airways flying boats, and flown to Singapore on FAM Route 14. It then was flown to Baghdad, Iraq by either a British or Dutch airline, arriving on August 6. It was censored in India, bearing both a censor handstamp and censor tape sealed with wax. Franked at $1.55 for twice the rate of 70¢ per 1/2 ounce + 15¢ registry fee.



Collecting Airmail Stamps

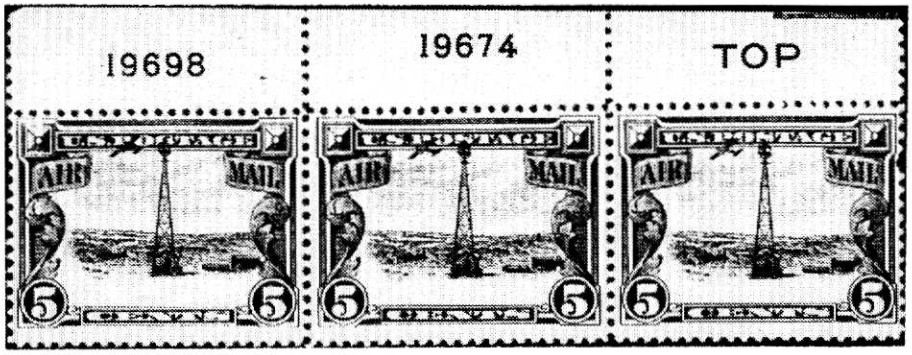
Kent J. Kobersteen

Airmail stamps can provide a fascinating, aesthetically pleasing, historically informative topic for the collector. You can build a collection of airmail stamps which is as broad as a single copy of every airmail stamp which has been issued worldwide, or as narrow as a specialized look at a single series or a single issue. Airmail postcards, stationery, and aerogrammes provide yet another area of specialization.

A collection of worldwide airmail stamps will show not only the development of aircraft and air-related events, but also will show how the airmail service developed worldwide. So too, will the collection of a single country's airmail issues tell the story of the development of airmail in that country. In the case of the United States, for instance, the development of the airmail both domestically and internationally, and the rates for this service, can be traced through a collection of U.S. airmail stamps.

You can also specialize in a single series, such as the U.S. Transport issue of the early 1940s, or a single stamp such as the Beacon airmail stamp of 1928. At first glance you might assume such specialization would limit your collecting options. Quite the contrary. After avidly collecting the Beacon airmail stamp for over fifteen years, one continually finds new material in usages on covers and in an extensive representation of the stamps.

A first step in building such a specialized collection of a single issue or series is to consult catalogues and specialized literature. *The American Air Mail Catalogue, Scott's Specialized U.S. Stamp Catalogue*, and Max G. Johl's *The United States Postage Stamps of the Twentieth Century, Volume III*, will indicate plate positions, recuts, varieties, and errors which have been found by other specialists. Many aerophilatelists have published works based on their research; a search of the philatelic literature will reveal new information in a variety of areas. It is extremely gratifying to make a discovery that has been overlooked by earlier experts.



Above:
Inaccuarate registration of vignette and frame printings created this example of a dramatic shift on the Beacon airmail stamp.

You might begin with the design itself, researching its origins. Essays of some stamps may be on the market, others exist only in the archives of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in Washington, D.C.

Mint stamps can be obtained showing various plate positions, guide lines, plate numbers, and other marginal markings, as well as sideographer and plate finisher's initials -- if they occur on the issue being studied.

It is also important to learn about the appropriate printing and perforating processes to analyze production varieties of the stamp or stamps in question. As you look at more copies of the stamp, you will find slight variations due to production differences. The archives of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing contain a wealth of information about the production of United States issues.

Used copies of airmail stamps offer unusual and interesting cancellations with numerous possibilities: fancy cancels, slogan cancels, socked-on-the-nose cancels, numeral cancels, paquebot and foreign cancels -- the list is nearly endless. You can also search for stamps with perforated insignia or perfins and precancels. Many pleasant hours can be had pouring over dealers' stocks or large lots of relatively common stamps. And, when mounted, the display of various cancellation varieties can be impressive.

Once you feel you have exhausted the possibilities of your stamp study, keep looking, and examine other stamp exhibits for ideas of new directions to pursue. You can always find more fascinating material to add to your stamp collection, and through study and scholarship you can contribute to the overall body of knowledge of your specialty. ✈

Collecting Etiquettes and Adhesives

Basil S. Burrell

In addition to postage stamps on flown mail, you may discover other adhesives on cards or envelopes. Some collectors find this an intriguing specialty study area, as they seek mail with various etiquettes, air labels, and semi-official airmail stamps.

Etiquettes are government issued labels which are designed to be adhered to letters which shall be carried via airmail. Countries and post offices all around the world have issued these labels, as listed in Jones' *Etiquettes: Par Avion - By Airmail.*

The original intent was to speed up the means of transport, over long or arduous routes. When the United States Government decided to fly all mail, if it deemed it to be more convenient and economical, the use of etiquettes became unnecessary except for international mail.



Left:
United Air Lines promoted their service and identified airmail letters with this complimentary air label.

Air labels are labels, similar to etiquettes, that the air lines issue and give away to advertise their air line name and identify airmail letters.

When all mail went via air "when convenient," the air lines decided these labels were an unnecessary expense, especially since the post office offered complimentary etiquettes. Therefore, most U.S. airline air labels are pre-1955.

The Aeronautica and Air Label Collectors Club, an AAMS chapter, has published the eight-volume *Airtransport Label Catalog*. Earlier works such as Muller's *Catalogue des Etiquettes Aeropostales* and Field's *Aero Field Handbook of Airmail Labels* would also provide resource information.

You can also find labels with an aviation theme issued privately and by various organizations for air shows, airport dedications, stamp shows, rocket mails, local posts, advertising, and other special events.

Semi-official airmail adhesives are government approved, but privately issued, stamps sold at post offices and designed to pay for the cost of air transport of mail. These letters, or covers, were required to have the regular surface government stamps to cover the cost of delivery. The private air lines then, with the pilot acting as a postman, carried the sacks of mail from post office to post office.

An example of this arrangement took place in Canada where long distances north of Winnipeg or Edmonton could be reached in a day by plane, while it might take two weeks by dog sled. There were 16 such companies that operated in Canada from 1924 to 1934. ✈

Collecting Aero-philatelic Literature

Dan Barber

For nearly seventy-five years airmail stamps and covers have appeared in more magazines, journals, monographs, and catalogues than most other philatelic specialties. Far beyond the usual listings of how many stamps were issued or how many covers were flown, a long succession of aerophilatelic scholars have pored over newspaper clippings, postal archives, airline timetables, aircraft registries, pilot biographies, and mountains of aeronautic and aviation publications.

Even before World War I the Aero Mail Club — the world's first aerophilatelic organization — began a serialized reporting of United States pioneer flight covers in Percy McGaw Mann's *Philadelphia Stamp News*, and later in *The New England Philatelist*. However, it was not until 1923 that England's Aero Philatelic Club of London and the Aero Philatelic Society of America began to issue monthly mimeographed sheets to its first members.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s a series of sometimes short-lived airmail groups added to the offerings with occasional magazines. But airmail journals and catalogues gained new visibility as the American Air Mail Society (AAMS) began its own publication series after 1931.

In 1926 Francis J. Field in England initiated a house organ, *The Aero Field*, that for nearly sixty years would


TRAVEL BY AIR

With the Air Mail — Speed Comfort

AIRWAY MAP OF U. S.

SCHEDULE AND RATES

NATIONAL PARKS AIRWAYS
INC.

Flying between Salt Lake City, Utah and Great Falls, Montana, with intermediate stops at Ogden, Pocatello, Butte & Helena.

PASSENGERS - AIR MAIL

Using the famous Fokker Super Universal Six Passenger Cabin Monoplane, equipped with 425 H. P. Pratt-Whitney "Wasp" Motor. Comfortable Cabins.

CONNECTIONS AT SALT LAKE CITY WITH
Boeing Air Transport—To Chicago; To San Francisco
Western Air Express—To Los Angeles
Varney Airlines—To Pacific Northwest

FLY YOUR MAIL

Right: Timetables, such as this example from National Parks Airways, can be a great source of information on routes, schedules, and airmail rates.

cover an international scene of airmail stamps and covers, while several years later in the United States the AAMS rapidly increased its circulation of *The Airpost Journal*, which became its monthly magazine.

As aviation, airmail, and aerophilately developed, collectors cast about for every bit of paper about planes, pilots, stamps, and covers. An article about the latest exploit of Charles Lindbergh or Amelia Earhart became as intrinsic to aerophilately as the latest auction catalogue of Fred Kessler, Irwin Heiman, or Nicolas Sanabria.

Zeppelin brochures and airline timetables became as necessary as *The Postal Bulletin*. Every article about the most recent Boeing or Douglas aircraft was a fundamental reference; some aerophilatelists snapped up the rotogravure sections of newspapers or stopped in the local movie house for clips of the latest long-distance flight.

Aerophilately has long been a hobby devoted to a mass of literature about much more than stamps and covers. There are literature hounds who go after long runs of aviation magazines of the 1920s and 1930s, as well as scholars who study auction catalogues of a number of firms. And every time there is a new biography released on some early airmail pilot, an aerophilatelist somewhere will be searching for a copy. With the aerophilatelist the book store becomes nearly as important as the stamp show.

The usual stamp catalogues and airmail cover handbooks have been around — and will continue to appear — for many decades, but the dedicated aerophilatelist is much like an archaeologist, digging about for more information about airlines, pilots, planes, flights, and a host of other details that define a hobby with few boundaries.

The literature of aerophilately is sometimes more difficult to locate than the airmail stamps and covers that collectors continue to study. A set of the three 1930 United States Zeppelin stamps can be easily found and purchased, but only the devout airmail specialist will keep searching for that elusive aircraft book or aeronautic magazine with the definitive article.

Since 1940 the American Air Mail Society has been one of aerophilately's most committed, and most successful, publishers, continuing a long tradition of journals, catalogues, and handbooks for specialized study. The future is still bright for aerophilatelic literature — there are still many airmail stories to be told. And collectors will forever seek the multitude of books and magazines that define a hobby quite undefinable. ✈

Below:
Horace Kearney was the pilot for the airmail flights during the three day Illinois Aviation Meet and Street Circus held in 1912 in McLeansboro, Illinois.

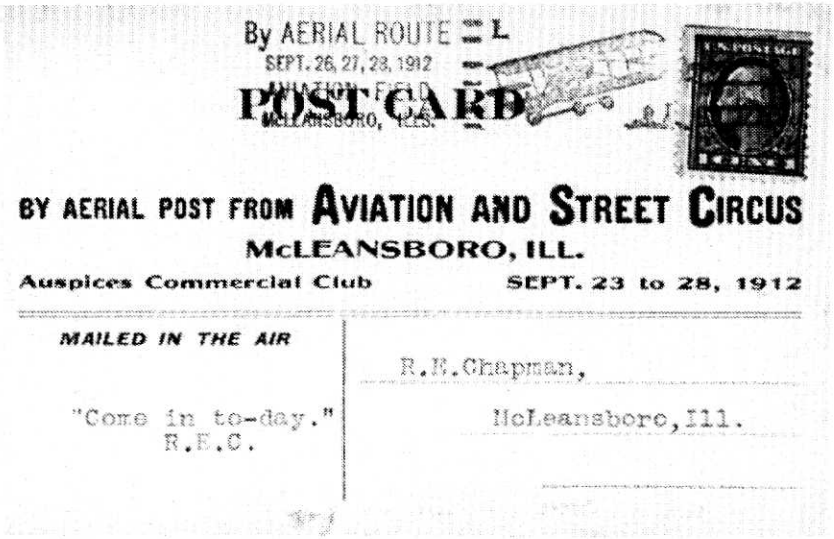
Setting the Clock

The Pioneer Period to 1918

Allen D. Jones

The first officially sanctioned, fixed-wing, pioneer airmail flight took place over a five-mile route between Allahabad and Naini Junction in India on February 18, 1911. The event was held in conjunction with the United Provinces Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition and flown by the French aviator Henri Pequet.

Argentina, Denmark, Great Britain, Italy, Morocco, Norway, and the United States followed India that year into the airmail age after the Allahabad flight. Many countries had mail flown or prepared to be flown prior to the 1911 flight, but this mail was either not flown by fixed-wing aircraft, not flown at all, or not officially sanctioned by a postal entity.



Generally any item, especially if it is flown, representative of airmail prior to regular scheduled airmail service from any country is collectible. Most pioneer material is collected by country, pilot, or aircraft type.

As with any philatelic collecting area, some items can be difficult or expensive to attain. However, research and knowledge in specific area(s) of collecting interest have netted collectors many previously unknown items, supporting the fact that knowledge reaps results.

Those who elect to collect material from the pioneer era of any country experience one of the most colorful periods of aerophilately, when each flight was an adventure, and each success a cause for celebration. ✈

The Developmental Period, 1918–1945

Samuel J. Pezzillo



Right:
French officer prisoner of war mail, October 1940, from Germany to the United States routed via South America and the Italian transatlantic service LATI paying only the expensive air supplement of 215 Reich pfennigs. The clipper from Lisbon would have been just 40 Reich pfennigs. Covers demonstrating multiple interests challenge the researcher.

The world began to shrink again and the airplane and airmail were a part of the revolution. The early stages of the developmental period were characterized by pioneer efforts and experiments in many parts of the world. In the United States we saw the beginning of regular point-to-point air service and the creation of a vast network of air routes. The latter stages saw the first efforts at crossing the great oceans with regular service, although foreign flights into the Caribbean basin and South America had come much earlier. The last years of the era showed the whole system stressed by war and the remarkable efforts to work around the chaos.

The developmental period in some foreign nations was much like that of the United States, linking distant or hard-to-reach places with increasingly speedy and reliable air service. In other places, such as Britain and the Netherlands, the developmental period was an effort to link far-flung sections of their empires, combining both national and international features.

The *American Air Mail Catalogue* is indispensable for chronicling the efforts of American carriers. Foreign flights and foreign carriers are more fully covered in the older Muller catalogue and in specialized national catalogues. Important monographs exist in many areas. A relatively unexplored collecting possibility is seeking mail of foreign origin carried on the first flights of another nation.

A more recent trend is fitting airmail into the postal history of the 20th century. This recognizes the role

the airplane and its mail have had in this century. Regular commercial mail often plays an important part in telling this story. Collectors are moving beyond the catalogued first flights to study mail that shows any air service. A cover carried by air over established routes only for a portion of its journey is often more revealing of the developmental aspects of air service for the period.

Inevitably linked to the process are the advancements in aircraft and air technology. Traditional collectors have always collected covers conveyed by various types of craft. Controversy arises when the focus shifts too heavily to the role the craft itself plays in speeding the mails. The transoceanic efforts at the end of the era were particularly indebted to the development of powerful long-range war planes. Similar issues arise for land-based versus sea-based planes and lead eventually to transoceanic and intercontinental flights to non-coastal cities. You can find diverse material to chronicle these developments. Exhibitors may very legitimately pursue the story through topical and thematic approaches.

Many nations, of course, have commemorated with postal issues both the personalities and equipment that transformed the 20th century. If you have a special interest in stamps rather than covers you may find this a fruitful area. A collection that links an original, historic flight cover with a later commemorative stamp issue can be especially challenging. A much neglected area is the air letter sheet both in its own right and as a weight reduction effort.

In an era like the present when air service has become the norm and fewer contemporary first flight covers are available, reworking the material of the developmental period in newer ways opens limitless possibilities. ✈

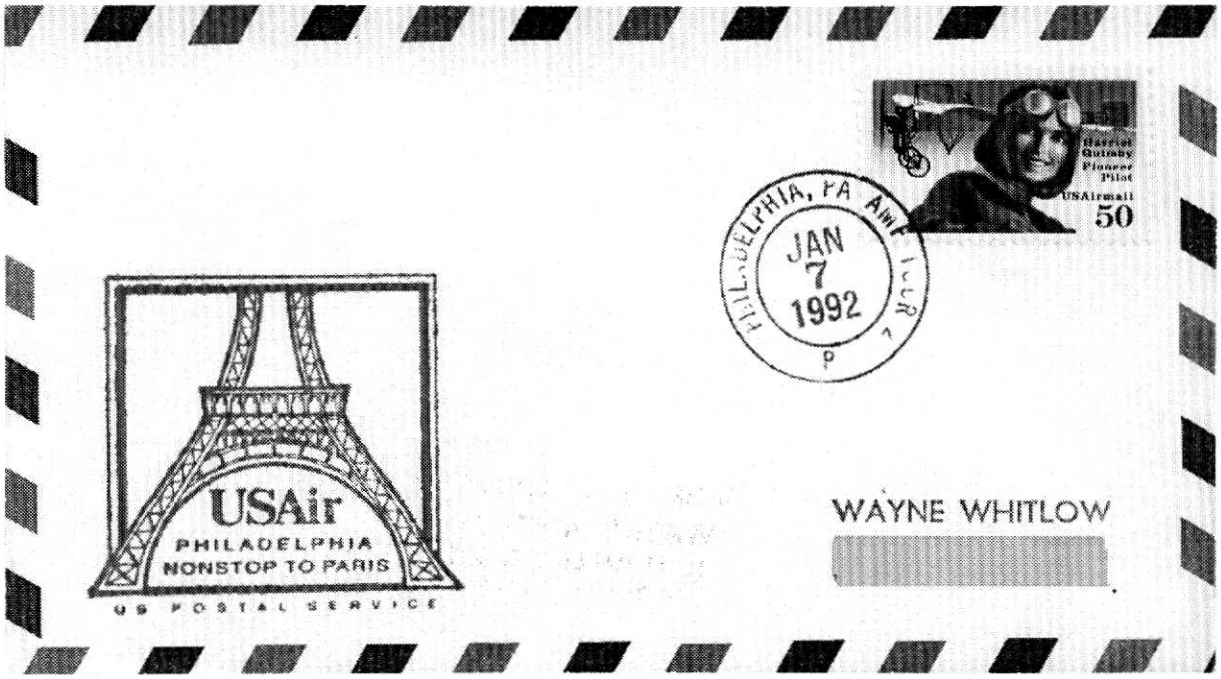
The Modern Period after 1945

Wayne Whitlow

U.S. first flight cover collecting in the post World War II era can be divided into two periods, before deregulation and after deregulation. The era saw tremendous growth in the airline industry with a more mobile society, new domestic and international routes being inaugurated, and new airlines being formed. Also the introduction of the commercial jet made travel by air more convenient and reliable.

After the deregulation of the domestic airline industry in December 1978, there was an influx of low cost carriers bringing low fares and convenient service to many markets. These new "no frills" airlines provided much needed competition to the established

Below:
First flight cover, flown from Philadelphia to Paris by USAir, with an official postal cachet.



carriers whose operating costs were higher, sadly, resulting in the demise of such companies as Eastern, Braniff, and Pan American World Airways. Other established carriers — Piedmont, Ozark, Pacific Coast, Mohawk — were absorbed into larger carriers, with air travel in the United States today being controlled by American, Continental, Northwest, TWA, United, and USAir. Many of the low-cost carriers did not survive, and the formation of others continues with some surviving and others operating for only a short time.

One of the results of deregulation was the dropping of subsidies provided by the United States Post Office to the airlines carrying the mail. Prior to deregulation the airlines were paid more to carry a letter than the post office collected in postage. This allowed the airlines to operate on routes where there were lower profits and less traffic. After deregulation, the airlines were allowed to establish routes to more heavily travelled markets and drop routes to the lower profit cities. These actions left many cities without regular airline service, a situation which was remedied by the establishment of commuter airlines.

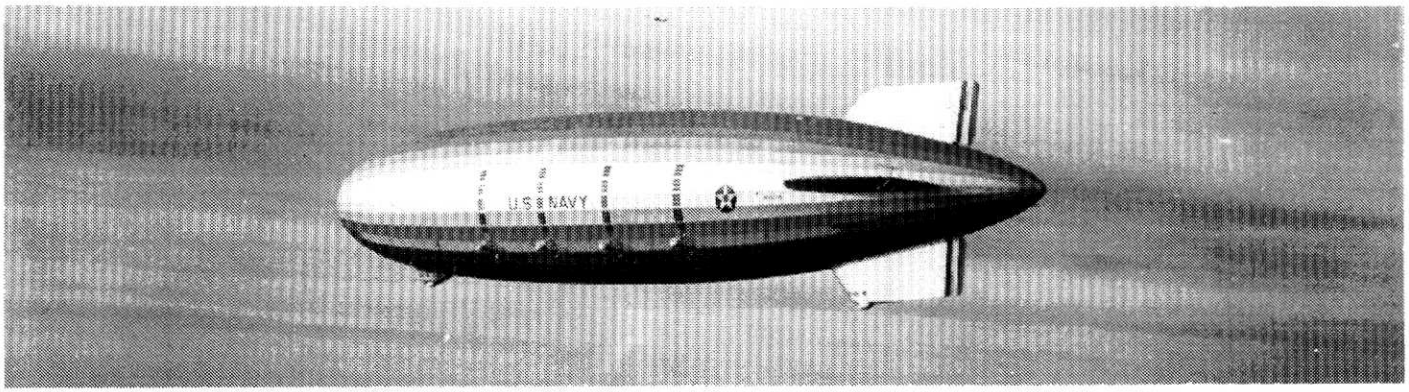
Finally in the post war period, the growth of the United States airline industry was paralleled in the rest of the world. Most international carriers not only provided service to their own local markets, but extended service to the United States and the rest of the world. Many of those airlines were either government owned or controlled, thus leaving the United States international carriers at a distinct disadvantage.

All of these events are well documented through the use of first flight covers. Types of covers most favored by the collector are Contract Air Mail (CAM) until deregulation December 1, 1978; Foreign Air Mail (FAM) until December 7, 1978; First Flights by United States Airlines (FFUS) after deregulation; Foreign Flag Flights (FFF) since the entry of international airlines into the U.S. market; Jet covers; and Supersonic Transport (SST) flight covers.

Until 1994 in the U.S., the post office supported airmail collectors by providing official recognition for many flight covers; in many cases a cachet was applied to envelopes sent by collectors to the applicable post office servicing a new route or service. After deregulation, many new routes went unrecognized by postal authorities as individual airlines either chose not to request the recognition or did not have sufficient time to make a request. Official flights were announced in *The Postal Bulletin*. Some collectors were able to seek out information and service mail on unofficial flights.

The United States Postal Service support for official flights ended in 1994, although in other parts of the world the support by local postal authorities continues. Subsequent to this decision, the number of covers flown on new routes and services by United States airlines has decreased substantially. You must seek out the new routes by checking newspapers, travel publications, and aviation specialty magazines. The excitement of first flight cover collecting is still there, as many local offices will honor your request to have envelopes placed on the aircraft making the inaugural flight. The thrill of having your covers flown on that new flight is quite rewarding! ✈

Below:
The U.S. Navy *Macon* in flight with an airplane above. Zeppelin airships carried mail worldwide, both officially and unofficially, earlier in the 20th century. (Ganz)



Surveying the Map

Collecting by Countries

Robert E. Lana

One of the most natural ways of collecting stamps and covers is to choose a country and begin to collect its stamps from the first issue until the present day. This collecting strategy sometimes leads to studying the postal history of the country through the markings found on entire covers.

Americans often collect United States stamps and covers or postal material from a neighboring country such as Canada or Mexico, or from the country from which their grandparents originated. In any case, choosing a country to collect allows you to narrow the often bewildering possibilities that are offered to you.

The history of flight and airmail involves almost every country in the world. Zeppelins carried mail from the beginning of the century until the late 1930s, and later flights carried mail from many nations all over the world. Mail was flown officially by airplane beginning in February, 1911 at Allahabad, India. While obtaining mail from some of these flights may be a bit expensive, you can start a collection of early airmail from many countries for only a modest outlay.

Even narrowing your airmail collecting interests to one country or a country with colonies may require that you narrow that interest still further in order to have a reasonable chance at building a complete collection. The early major airmail nations of the world, such as the United States, Britain, Italy, Germany, and France, produced a great many flights on which collectible mail was flown. To acquire examples of mail from all or most of those flights is not only quite costly, but virtually impossible. However, there are alternatives. One example is mail flown on the 1926 airmail routes established in Italy. Italy issued the world's first airmail stamp in 1918. By 1926 Italy had developed a national air service that carried passengers and mail to all of that country's major cities.

The service began on April 1, 1926, with a flight from Turin to Pavia to Venice to Trieste. The various stops among those four cities produced some thirteen different legs of the journey made between April 1 and 6. On April 7, a flight was made between Rome and Genoa, and between Rome, Naples, and Palermo. This produced ten more first flights.

Covers exist which were carried on the first flight made to each of these cities. They were flown in sufficient numbers so that today they are not terribly expensive. If you acquired all twenty-three covers, the result would be a mini-collection representing a significant piece of Italian airmail history. Similar collections can be made for other countries by concentrating on their airmail flight history. ✈



Above:
First flight cover from the Turin-Pavia leg of the Turin-Trieste circuit. Markings incude the four line cachet of the flight service (S.I.S.A), the Turin-Trieste double circle flight cachet, Turin railroad postmarks, and a boxed Turin-Pavia flight leg cachet. The 60¢ airmail stamp was required additional payment for air service.

Collecting by Route

William Kriebel

The birth of commercial airline development in the world is easily traced to the end of World War I. Wartime research and development had improved the performance of the airplane to a practical, although somewhat imperfect, means of transport. The intercontinental airlines of Great Britain, the Netherlands, and France developed consistently with a desire to link up to their scattered territories, increase national



Above:
The 1922 airmail route from Lisbon to Brazil is commemorated on this anniversary souvenir cover.

prestige, and spread national propaganda–political, cultural, and commercial. France, via the development of its routes to the west coast of Africa, eyed the east coast of South America. Argentina was at the time the most prosperous and developed country, and its capital, Buenos Aires, the "Paris of South America."

France started survey flights in Brazil as early as 1925 and would eventually develop a "line" which ran down the coast of Brazil from Natal to Rio de Janeiro and, finally, Buenos Aires. At the same time, the German aircraft industry, searching for new markets, had already entered Colombia and Bolivia and then Brazil. Most of these countries had large German populations which were supportive of the development that the local governments were unable to provide, and which could offer incentives in terms of mail contracts to foster links with remote populations otherwise unconnected by either paved roads or railway lines. Most of Brazil's major cities were along the coast, and hydroplanes were the obvious answer. The vast interior would be developed as the aircraft was improved in performance and support facilities were provided.

With the help of a suitable atlas, an encyclopedia and/or history of the countries involved, and other reference material including books like R.E.G. Davies' *Airlines of Latin America since 1919* and *Airlines of the United States since 1914*, books on aircraft of the day, which provide information on the capacity and range of the equipment, and philatelic references in magazines, books, and catalogues like those of the AAMS, you will find new meaning to your collection. Many of the early pioneers have documented their ventures. General magazines like *National Geographic* can provide exciting visuals which contribute to an understanding, especially if you can mentally transpose the image to an earlier time.

For the early days it is necessary to dismiss the idea of pressurized cabins and non-stop jet service of today and picture open cockpits, cramped seats, and minimal, if any, navigation equipment. First flights were often "hops" and limited to connections between established or larger communities. As time, equipment, and facilities progressed, you learn to appreciate the contribution of the early pioneers in the development of routes of communication via airmail. ✈

Collecting by Airline

Greg Schmidt

You can collect by an airline or by an aviation service, such as the army or navy, or even by the aircraft manufacturer. An airline is defined as a system furnishing air transport, usually scheduled, between specified points. The world's first scheduled air service began operation in Florida in 1914, as the St. Petersburg – Tampa Airboat Line. Since that time many airlines have been inaugurated around the world, with most of them either going out of business or merging with other smaller airlines to form larger airlines.

Some of the more recognizable foreign airlines through the years have been Air France, KLM, Imperial, C.N.A.C., Qantas, and Lufthansa. If you have ever been to a large airport, you probably have seen just a handful of the airlines operating in this country, such as American Airlines, Northwest, United, TWA, Continental, and Midwest Express. Other airlines, such as North Central, Pacific Marine Airways, Pacific Air Lines, and Pan American Airways, have disappeared through the years.

An example of one airline is Pan American Airways and its service to the Pacific Ocean. The two airplane manufacturers for Pan American were Sikorsky and Boeing. Survey flights were conducted from April to October of 1935 to several islands in the Pacific. Service was inaugurated in November of 1935 with stops at Hawaii, Midway, Wake, Guam, and the Philippines. Regular passenger service began in late 1936, with service extended to Hong Kong in 1937. South Pacific service by Pan American Airways began with survey flights in late 1937 and then again in 1939. Service was inaugurated in July of 1940 and included stops at Canton Island and New Caledonia, ending in New Zealand. Fiji was added in November of 1941. Service was discontinued on December 7, 1941 and resumed again in 1945.

Airmail collecting can be as simple or as specialized as any other form of stamp and cover collecting. You could try and collect all the first flights from Pan American Airways, or specialize by concentrating on the development of airmail service to the Pacific by Pan American Airways. Airmail collectors need to acquire special books, catalogues, and reference materials to better understand and appreciate their collecting area. Information can be acquired through the *American Air Mail Catalogues*, books such as Davies' *Airlines of the United States since 1914*, and journals such as the AAMS publications *The Airpost Journal* and *Jack Knight Air Log*. ✈

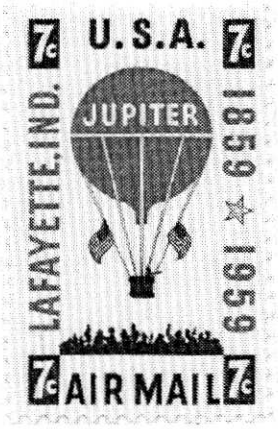


Below:
Pan American Airways Survey Flight, January 2–1, 1938, crossing the international date line, from Auckland, New Zealand to American Samoa.

Navigating the Aircraft

Lighter than Air Via Balloon

David Hollenbaugh



Above:
One of several balloon stamps issued in the United States.

Collecting balloon stamps and balloon mail is an exciting, interesting, and colorful area of topical specialization for both the beginner and the advanced collector, and is suitable for nearly every pocketbook. A good place to start a balloon stamp collection is with the many 1983 issues commemorating the Montgolfier brothers and the 200th anniversary of manned flight. Over 50 countries issued balloon stamps or souvenir sheets that year. Although the frequency of new balloon issues has since diminished, there is a more historically diverse selection of earlier worldwide issues, many dating from the thirties, which commemorate contemporary scientific or exploratory flights, or other notable ballooning events. They are a bit pricier than the more recent issues. Balloon aerogrammes, though fewer in number than either stamps or covers, are also collectible.

Balloon flown covers are very popular and are becoming more numerous each year. Some covers are prepared for transoceanic and other long distance balloon flights, usually in limited quantities. These are invariably offered at a premium in order to help defray the cost of the flight, but make great additions to any collection.

Souvenir covers issued for a specific ballooning event, such as the annual U.S. National Hot Air Balloon Championships and the Kodak Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, are inexpensive, readily available, and come in endless varieties. Look for covers with a ballooning cachet, a special pictorial cancellation, a balloon stamp (the recent 19¢ U.S. definitive issue for example), the name of a participating balloon, and the pilot's signature. All of these elements on one cover amount to a collecting "grand slam."

Balloon "monte" materials comprise a specialized field within the ballooning topic. *Ballon Montes* are pieces of mail flown from Paris by gas balloon between September 1870 and February 1871 during the Franco Prussian War. The name, short for *Par Ballon Monte* or "by manned balloon," reflects the notation required on each postal item flown. Balloon montes are relatively expensive and prices can vary according to specific balloon and markings, but having one of these letters, cards, or journals in your collection is like owning a piece of both ballooning and philatelic history.

Visit the concession areas at major ballooning events and ballooning museums to find flown mail. You can visit stamp dealers and read the stamp papers for articles and ads. Or chase a balloon and ask the pilot! To build a collection of balloon stamps, use a world-wide stamp catalogue. For balloon mail a variety of catalogues are used, including the out-of-print *Balloon Posts World Catalog 1783-1968* by Boesman and the AAMS publication *Balloon Posts of the Siege of Paris 1870-1871* by Chantrier. ✈

Via Zeppelin

Bob Wilcsek

A popular way to start a Zeppelin collection is to collect the different flight cachets used for the Zeppelin flights. For example, most of the *Graf Zeppelin* flights had a unique cachet and an attractive collection can be assembled. There is just the right balance of material to make the search exciting without becoming hopeless or excessively expensive. From the pioneer period of the German Zeppelins early in the century to the special event covers of the American airships *Akron* and *Macon* in the 1930s, there is plenty of material to collect in a variety of price categories.

You might choose to focus on a particular Zeppelin or airship or a particular area to collect. For example, dispatch and destination covers from a single country, like the United States, with or without the expensive Zeppelin stamp issues; or Germany, Brazil, or another of the many countries that sent mail by Zeppelin. Not all areas can be made inexpensive, but some can. You

might also collect geographical areas such as the Holy Land, British Empire, or other favorites. This can get expensive, especially for non-treaty states, the nations that had no direct mail contract for Zeppelin mail service. However, there are many collectors who are not intimidated by price or who have been seduced by the thrill of the hunt.

The thrill of the hunt is exactly what is involved in another type of Zeppelin collecting — one flight. You could spend a lifetime collecting only the *Graf Zeppelin*'s 1929 Round-the-World flight, the 1930 South America flight, the *Hindenburg*'s first North American flight, or one of the many other specialty flights. This can seem hopeless at times, as many pieces are very rare, but occasionally new discoveries of unlisted items are made, and it is very exciting.

For any of the Zeppelin collecting choices, a good catalogue is necessary. The *American Air Mail Catalogue* is an excellent resource with good pricing information. A more detailed listing can be found in the German Sieger *Zeppelinpost Katalog* or the Michel *Zeppelin- und Flugpost-Spezial-Katalog*. Many reference books and journal articles exist for specialized areas; and study groups, such as the AAMS Zeppelin Collectors Club, continue to provide new information.✈

Below:
Cover flown on the *Graf Zeppelin* flight to Lakehurst, New Jersey in 1929 with a German Zeppelin stamp, an official rubber stamp cachet, and a privately printed cachet by the airmail dealer A.C. Roessler.



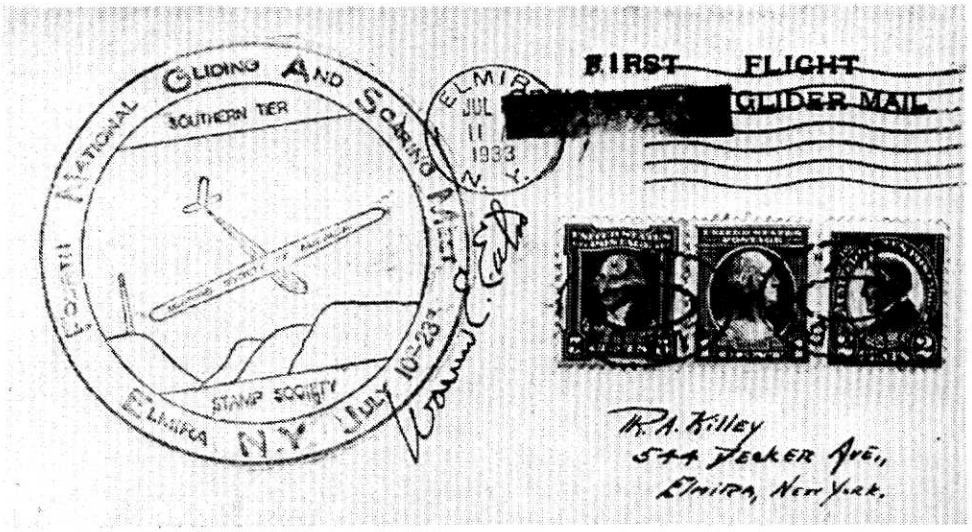
Heavier than Air Via Glider

Simine Short

Most airmail collectors are vaguely aware of glider mail. However, many are not familiar with gliders in general, so this aerophilatelic collecting area is not as widely known or collected as mail flown by balloon, airship, or airplane.

Prior to World War II, the development of aviation as a means of carrying mail inspired numerous experiments searching for economical methods to cover distance and to reach remote locales. Political conditions and limited resources, especially in central Europe in the 1920s, led to experiments with gliders which might use nature's air currents to support an aircraft without an engine. This led to the development of the Sky Train, using one "locomotive" airplane and multiple unpowered glider "cars." Considerable sky train development in the 1930s was officially sponsored. This development reached its peak in military usage by a number of countries during World War II.

The contribution of motorless aviation is interesting and challenging. Talking with the people who made the events happen in the 1920s and 1930s makes one highly aware that history was made in a very



Right:
Warren E. Eaton, one of the founders of the Soaring Society of America, carried about 16 pounds of mail in his Franklin PS2 glider from Harris Hill into the valley which is now Chemung County Airport. Due to some misunderstandings, the post office could not process the mail until the words "Official U.S." in the flight cachet were blackened out. Mail was then postmarked in Elmira, New York on July 10, 1933.

painstaking fashion. Flown covers from this time period are proof of those pioneering achievements. They are historical and significant as souvenirs carried on flights which contributed to the development of aviation.

In general, flown or souvenir glider mail is not expensive and additional research can still be done. Discoveries can still be made.

There are many ways to collect glider mail: as officially or unofficially flown airmail; as part of the development of aviation; on stamps and first day covers; or as a subject. There is something for every collecting taste and pocket book. Are you ready to get started? United States glider flights are listed in the *American Air Mail Catalogue* and worldwide coverage is in *Glider Mail, an Aerophilatelic Handbook*, or check *The Airpost Journal* and some of its back issues. Have fun! ✈

Via CAMS

Robert Outlaw

A collection of Contract Air Mail (CAM) covers records the expansion of the United States Air Mail Service, the development of heaver-than-air craft, and the practical application of airplanes to the transportation of mail — as new airmail service between cities, or to new cities, was opened until deregulation on December 1, 1978. Many collect specific contract routes, specific cities and regions, specific airlines, and time eras. Pictorial



Right:
CAM 2 card flown by Col. Lindbergh on February 21, 1928, from Chicago to St. Louis, franked with the *Spirit of St. Louis* airplane stamp. Mail connecting from Milwaukee was flown on a special Sunday flight on route 9.

cachet and cancel varieties add interest to the covers.

In 1926 the United States Post Office Department contracted with private operators for mail transport by private enterprise. The first contracts were let to the Ford Motor Company and designated as CAM Routes 6 and 7, on which service was inaugurated February 15, 1926. The term "contract" was used because original routes were awarded after competitive bidding and the service was created by an Act of Congress. There was an interruption of service in February 1933 when President Roosevelt ordered the Post Office to cancel contracts and U.S. Army planes flew the mail while new bids were sought and routes rearranged.

The best source for information is the *American Air Mail Catalogue*. The illustrated listing includes detailed information on routes, dates, airlines, pilots, quantities carried, varieties, additions and extensions, and values. This is still a reasonably priced area of collecting that provides exciting challenges as you shuffle through shoeboxes of covers in dealers' stocks or trade with fellow collectors. ✈

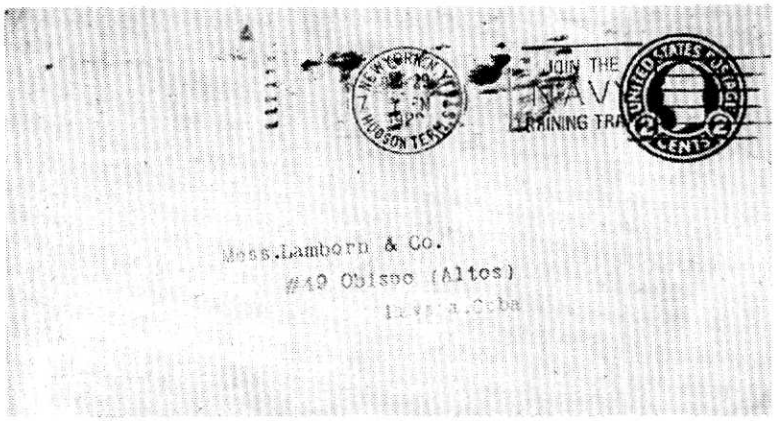
Via FAMS

Robert Spooner

Foreign Air Mail (FAM) routes are those which were assigned to United States airlines over which mail was carried from United States points to foreign countries, except for certain operations involving Canada and Mexico. As aircraft could fly farther, faster or higher, airmail could be flown to countries further and further away from United States borders.

One example is the first United States FAM Route 1 from Key West to Havana, Cuba, about 100 miles over the horizon in the Caribbean. In 1920 it was a reasonable goal. Aircraft could cover such distances, but operators had to learn how to navigate out of sight of land on a regular schedule and with diversions around large tropical thunder storms or by flying through other poor weather conditions. A contractor was ready to accept the challenge and provided converted World War I flying boats to carry mail for the United States Post Office Department, as well as passengers. The first flight was on November 1, 1920. A special cachet was provided in Havana on the reverse of the envelopes. Five hundred pounds of regular Havana mail received preferential airmail service rather than going through a normal Florida port. Only one business letter has been described in the philatelic literature to date. Many of these covers are waiting to be found!

FAM history is alive with interesting events that affected airmail service in good as well as detrimental ways, providing challenges to the collector. Postmarks help to show changes in routing when weather or revolutions prevented landing at intended destinations. Pilot signatures show who carried the mail. Even Lindbergh carried FAM mail in the Caribbean, although his autograph on this mail is quite scarce. The *American Air Mail Catalogue* provides FAM information on routes, pilots, cachets, inaugural flights, changes in service, quantity of mail carried, and representative prices. There are helpful resources available for anyone who wants to get involved in collecting Foreign Air Mails. ✈





Above and Left:
The only business letter identified in the philatelic literature from the first flight of FAM 1, identified by the circular cachet on the back. Many of these covers are waiting to be found from the 500 pounds of carried mail.

Recovered Mail

Philip R. McCarty

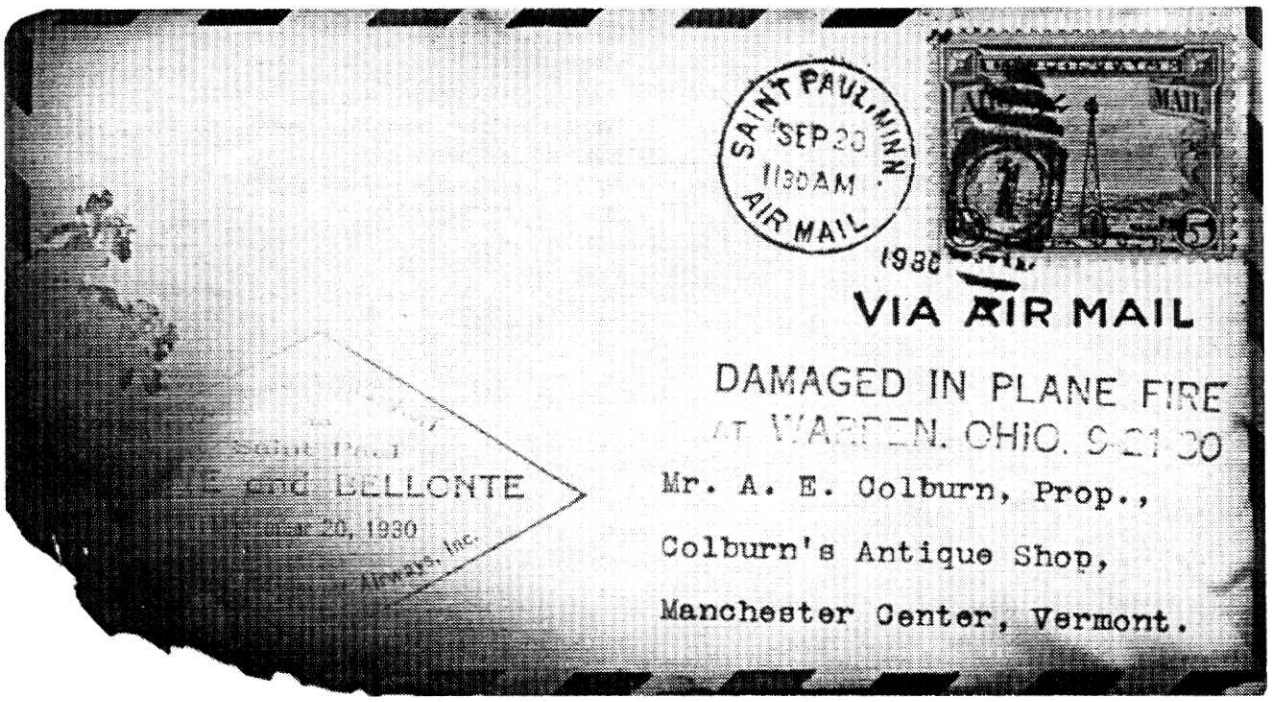
One of the very fascinating and challenging areas of aerophilately is the collecting of interrupted flight covers, more commonly called "crash covers." These covers are not created covers but rather covers that are the result of a mishap or crash, which is one of the reasons that they are relatively scarce. Each has its own story, from the pioneer pilot and the Jenny to our modern day jets. In the early years of airmail service there were many accidents due to inexperienced pilots, frail planes, faulty equipment, and weather.

Weather was the major factor in a large number of crashes as in the crash of Maurice Graham, who left Los Angeles on January 10, 1930, for Salt Lake City. The plane was finally found June 24, 1930, near Cedar City, Utah, only after the snow melted. One month later the pilot's body was found, with the mail intact, twenty miles away from the crash site.

Condition of recovered mail varies from the badly burned, watersoaked, and stained to no damage whatsoever. If there is no appreciable damage to the mail, it is forwarded without any markings. Damaged covers receive a rubber-stamped cachet to explain the reason for the damage or delay. Frequently a mimeographed note or letter of explanation accompanies the delivery, usually within a government "penalty" envelope when the original envelope is badly damaged.

There are many ways that crash covers are collected; the most common is by the location of the crash, such as country, state, or territory. Some collectors seek interrupted flight covers by the type of aircraft or by certain airlines. Whatever way you choose, the challenge begins. ✈

Below:
Damaged covers often receive a rubber-stamped cachet explaining the reason for the damage or delay, as in this piece of recovered mail from Warren, Ohio, in 1930.



Via Rocket

Ray Broms

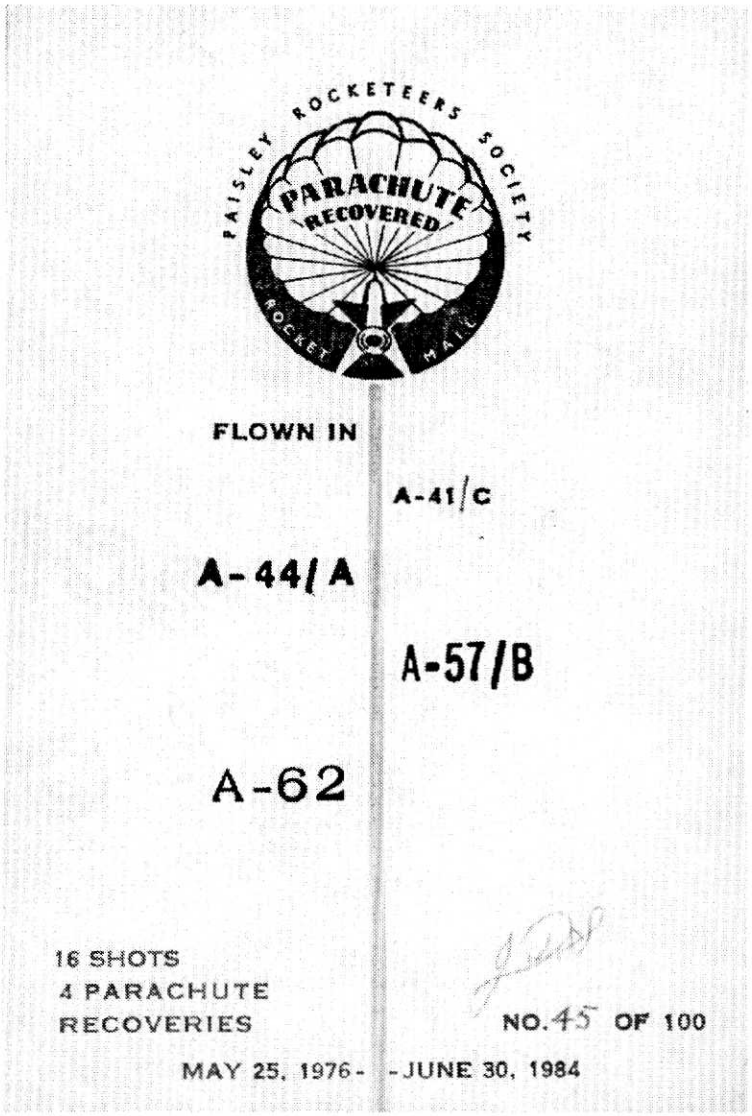
During the pioneer rocket period in the 1930s, rocketeers tried to perfect various forms of rockets while demonstrating the value of using rockets for the regular, speedy delivery of mail. Early rocket designs were creative, including the first three-stage rocket designed by an amateur. Experiments met with varying success as rocketeers tried to show military potential or target remote mountain villages. Eventually, however, these attempts got little further than the enthusiasm of the inventor-rocketeers, but the record of their valiant efforts has made rocket post collecting a romantic and adventurous area of specialization.

The areas of space and rocket collecting are closely related. While we usually associate space covers with "outer space," almost all rocket covers did not go as far as outer space. Rocket covers before the space era are sought by astrophilatelists to show the stages of how man reached for the stratosphere and beyond.

Rocket covers can be categorized by the rocketeer, such as Schmidl, Roberti, or Stewart; by the organization, such as the Society of Applied Rocketry or the Rocket Research Institute; by a commemorative event; or by the country of origin. Because the rocket era spans the early 1930s to the present, there are many avenues of research open. Newspapers, town histories, and oral interviews add to the existing philatelic resources.

Rocket covers are well within the reach of the average collector. While many covers are scarce, this is still a relatively new area of collecting and many items are available. Collectors may participate individually or in an organized group of philatelists or rocketeers. You can collect worldwide with limited foreign language skills as the essential information is in the dated postmark and cachet. The *Ellington-Zwisler Rocket Mail Catalog* lists mail alphabetically by country and is well illustrated. One learns about rocketry and its history while collecting and/or creating flown documents.

Most rocket covers have rocket labels, official or unofficial, in addition to the standard postage. These labels are highly collectible, and many collections and exhibits trace the complete history and manufacture of rocket labels with essays, proofs, errors, multiples, and tete-beche examples. Often rocket mail is signed by the rocketeer or a related participant. Seeking autographs on rocket posts can add to the fun of the hunt. ✈



Above:
A rocket flimsy flown by a rocket club in the United Kingdom in 1984 and signed by the rocketeer John Stewart.

Scanning the Horizons

Collecting Aircraft on Stamps

Sanford Solarz

Collecting aircraft on stamps is, arguably, a topical pursuit outside the realm of airmail. But a subdivision of the topic, stamps showing airplanes that carried mail, tells a dramatic story of technical achievement that within a single decade transformed the aerial transportation of mail from stunt status to scheduled flights.

Starting with the Sommer-type biplane that carried the first-ever airmail in India to today's jet transports, the aviation part of airmail can be shown in dramatic fashion by stamps. Where a particular airplane doesn't exist on a stamp, you may find it on a pictorial postmark or a first flight cover cachet. You can further

expand the scope of such a collection by including airships, balloons, helicopters, gliders, or even pigeons.

Another approach is to specialize in a particular type of aircraft. Take, for example, seaplanes on stamps. Without them, airmail service to Central and South America and across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans would have waited until airports were built capable of handling large land planes.

Mail-carrying seaplanes immediately bring to mind the Pan Am flying boats. These include the Sikorsky S-38, -40, and -42 widely used in the Caribbean and South America, the Martin M-130 China Clipper which flew the first Pacific airmail service and the greatest of them all, the Boeing 314 used for transatlantic flights to England and France. Most of these aircraft appear on stamps. Covers flown on them are relatively inexpensive and add a dimension of postal history. Foreign mail-carrying seaplanes include Imperial Airways' Short flying boats, Condor's Dornier Wal and Lufthansa's 12-engined Do-X.



Below:
Pictorial postmarks add a new dimension to collecting airplanes on stamps. The Curtiss Jenny, shown on this postmark and stamp, was used to inaugurate the world's first regular airmail system in 1918.

Two other areas of specialization are the LZ127 *Graf Zeppelin* and the supersonic Concorde. Both appear on many stamps, and collections of them may be spiced with flown covers.

Flown covers tell only part of the story of airmail. Collectors of aircraft on stamps may wish to sing this paraphrase of a song Maurice Chevalier made famous, "Thank heaven for airplanes. Without them what would airmail do?" ✈

Collecting by Aviators

Stephen Neulander

Unlike the theoretical sciences, aviation depends on human daring as well as genius. The pioneers of aviation, with their primitive skills, risked their lives with every flight. Later pilots flew the designs of others but applied their skill and nerve to test the reliability and extend the utility of their airplanes. Intermixed in this history is the carrying of airmail by famous pilots such as Charles Lindbergh and Jack Knight and hundreds of lesser known fliers, including many who autographed souvenir mail. Today, philatelists interested in the people that made aviation happen have a rich field from which to draw.



Above:
1995 first class postage issue honoring Bessie Coleman, pioneer African American aviatrix.

Although the first names that come to mind when considering personalities in aviation are Orville and Wilbur Wright, aviation on stamps can be traced back to mythology with Icarus and his wings of wax and feathers. Then there is Leonardo Da Vinci, the first aeronautical engineer. Don't forget Otto Lilienthal who with 2,000 glider flights founded the science of aerodynamics. All are honored on stamps and covers.

Collecting "women in aviation" is an example of an aviator specialty that can be a great deal of fun without being expensive. It is worldwide in scope depending upon your area of interest and need not be limited to pilots as a subject. In 1995 Ellen Collins commanded the space mission to link up with the Russian *Mir*. On that flight Janet Voss was also aboard. Cards or covers with the *Mir* docking cancellation could be sent to these astronauts for autographs. These items added to the $10.75 *Endeavour* lift off stamp tell a story in one's collection.

Postcards and stamps from many countries, as well as flown and commemorative covers exist to expand your topic. Reasonably priced material that may be found at stamp shows include Jackie Cochran's flight cover from Jamestown, Virginia, to New York; New Zealand stamps issued honoring Jean Batten; and souvenirs of Amelia Earhart's take-off for her round-the-world flight.

While "women in aviation" may seem to be a narrow topic, you may refine the subject further, for example,

balloonists, early birds, air racers, barnstormers, manufacturing, record setters, over the oceans, around the world, carrying the mail, commercial airline pilots, flight attendants, women at war, space, passengers, organizations, and famous pilots.

Carry envelopes to be signed when you fly or visit air shows. Search everything at a dealer's table as "aviators" will not likely be listed with its own category for easy pickings. That often makes the challenge of finding items more rewarding. ✈

What is Astrophilately?

Reuben Ramkissoon

Astrophilately is based on a *chronologic* philatelic study of the historical, technical, and scientific aspects related to space research, programs, and their development. While its "theme" is always "space related," it does not really develop a "space theme," but is rather a chronologic study of a particular segment, for example Project Mercury, with its excitement as man moved into the threshold of space, to the increasing daring ventures of Gemini and Apollo culminating with the epochal "Event of the Century," when Apollo 11 Commander Astronaut Neil Armstrong announced to the world as he stepped on the Moon, "That's one small step for man; one giant leap for mankind!"

The astrophilatelic approach records through philatelic material, the chronological documentation of both scientific and technical aspects of the space program being shown. The emphases are those of the appropriate *time, date,* and *place* of the postal chronology, shown by official government-sponsored cachets, as well as regular and special postmarks.

In astrophilately, very often the stamps on the covers shown are ordinary issues, not in any way related to the space theme. Furthermore, the postmark shown may only be a regular cancellation date stamp, not tied into any theme development. What matters only is that the cover utilizes correctly by time, date, and place a direct relevance to the chronology and historicity of the events being developed. ✈

Below:
The Apollo 17 launch cover illustrates important aspects of astrophilately, including the Kennedy Space Center Official cachet, issued and applied by the post office, which is preferred over other cachets; the launch site, Kennedy Space Center, is correctly shown by the postmark of the closest postal facility to the launch complex; the correct date of December 7, 1972; the time of AM; and an addressed cover with the correct rate of postage.



Exhibiting Aerophilately and Astrophilately

Stephen Reinhard

Collectors of airmail material, known as aerophilatelists, are some of the most prolific exhibitors in the world. One or more airmail exhibits can be seen at most any stamp exhibition in the United States, and an entire section is reserved at international shows for aerophilatelic and astrophilatelic exhibits.

There are many opportunities



Above:
The AAMS award medal which is presented to exhibitors of airmail at national stamp exhibitions, and at AAMS meetings and conventions.

to exhibit your favorite aerophilatelic material in this country. First-time exhibitors should aim towards a local or regional show near where they live. Much experience can be gained from exhibiting at this level. These shows typically award gold, silver, and bronze medals, although variations exist. After you have learned more about exhibiting you may wish to show your material at the national level. There are over thirty national stamp shows in the United States, and anyone may apply to exhibit at any of these shows. Five medal levels are awarded. Standards are much higher than at the local shows. Awards are assigned using guidelines published by the American Philatelic Society. These guidelines may be found in the *Manual of Philatelic Judging* available from the APS, P.O. Box 8000, State College PA 16803.

The American Air Mail Society supports two exhibitions each year, usually at national level stamp shows. At these exhibitions anywhere from 10 to 25 airmail exhibits will be on display. Attendance at one or more of the AAMS national meetings is a great way to see what other aerophilatelists are exhibiting, and what techniques they are using. At these shows the American Air Mail Society provides a complete range of awards, in addition to the show awards.

Once a vermeil medal is won at a national level show, you may try international exhibiting. There is a special class for aero and astro-philately at all internationals supported by the Federation Internationale de Philatelie (FIP). A whole new set of rules governs exhibiting at this level, where eight levels of awards are given.

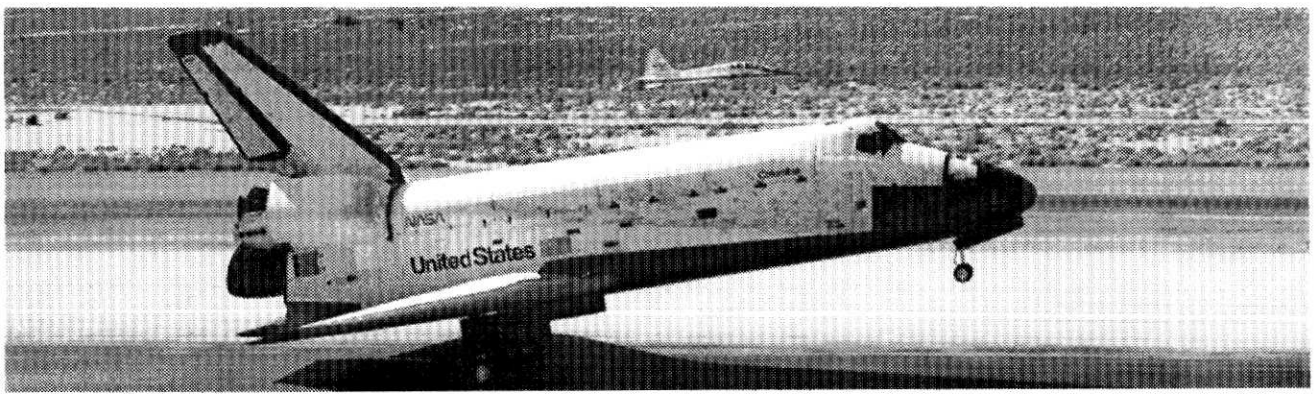
Other worldwide aerophilatelic exhibitions, from non-competitive to international level, are under the auspices of the International Federation of Aero-Philatelic Societies (FISA) and offer a chance to exhibit and view exceptional air mail items.

Almost any subtopic of aerophilately or astrophilately may be exhibited at any stamp show in America, including Zeppelin mail, Lindberghiana, crash mail, pioneer airmail, governmental flights, airmail rates, glider mail, Pan American covers, transpacific airmail, airmail postal history, and others. *The Airpost Journal* features helpful articles and columns on exhibiting.

A standard frame in the United States holds sixteen 8½ by 11 inch pages. Exhibits usually are comprised of one to ten frames. An exhibit must tell a story, having a beginning and an ending with a logical sequence in between. Much fun can be had putting together an exhibit using philatelic material in your collection. Research can be done, and new discoveries can be made, which adds to the enjoyment.

As you get further into collecting airmails you should try exhibiting. It will add immeasurably to your hobby pleasure. There is nothing like seeing your material in frames at a stamp show and discussing your area with viewers. The joys of exhibiting are many, including the friendships developed in front of the frames. ✈

Below:
The Space Shuttle orbiter *Columbia* returns from its final test flight, STS-4, in 1982. (NASA)



Glossary

reprinted in part from The Airpost Journal

Airgraph – Photographed airmail letter. Microfilm of original letter was flown, then enlarged and printed on a special form at its destination.

Airlift Flight – Flight made to carry mail to otherwise inaccessible location due to blockade or enemy occupation of usual access routes.

Airship Mail – Flown by airship, either a lighter-than-air (LTA) craft characterized by a rigid, e.g., a Zeppelin, or a semi-rigid or non-rigid LTA craft.

Attempted Flight – Flight which failed to achieve its goal, e.g., altitude, distance, or destination.

Balloon Flight – Flight made by a balloon. Balloon Monte refers to a manned balloon or covers carried by one. Balloon Non Monte refers to unmanned balloons and mail.

Cancelled Flight – Planned flight which was not made due to adverse weather, damaged aircraft, no aircraft available, or other reason.

Catapult Flight – Flight made by an aircraft launched by a catapult system, usually from on board a ship.

Combination Cover – Cover transported by air and one or more non-air primary means in transit to the original destination.

Combination Flight Cover – Cover flown by two different airmail means in transit to the original destination.

Commemorative Flight – Flight retracing all or part of a prior, historically important flight or commemorating an important aviation event.

Contract Air Mail (CAM) – United States airmail routes flown by various carriers under contract with the U.S. Post Office.

Crash – Incomplete flight due to aircraft accident resulting in damage to or destruction of the aircraft, with mails (if not lost) forwarded by other aircraft or other means (sometimes referred to as recovered; i.e., salvaged mail).

Double Flown – Cover flown once, then readdressed and flown again. See "Round trip cover."

Dropped Mail – Mail dropped from the air for forwarding.

Emergency Flight – Flight undertaken in response to an emergency, i.e. floods, severe storms, breakdown of rail transportation, strikes, etc.

First Flight – Initial flight of airline, route, or aircraft with official airmail. Also known as inaugural flight.

Flight Leg – A point-to-point dispatch or segment of a longer route.

Flown – Carried on an aerial flight and bearing evidence of being flown. Covers flown with postal authorization are official, i.e., officially flown; if flown without postal authorization, a cover is unofficial; i.e., private.

Foreign Airmail (FAM) – International contract airmail route flown by a United States airline under contract with the United States Post Office from U.S. point(s) to a foreign country and vice versa.

Glider Flight – Flight by glider or sailplane, unpowered aircraft.

Interrupted Flight – Non-continuous flight. In-flight problem resulting in unplanned landing. Fight continued later by the same aircraft or, to expedite mail, another aircraft.

Lighter-Than-Air (LTA) – Encompassing all air travel means of this type, including balloons and airships.

Non-Flown – Not carried on any aerial flight, but directly related to an aero or astro event or anniversary, *or* cover from a planned or projected flight which was not made, *or* cover directed to be flown but not flown due to no flight planned or made, unavailable service, weather factors, or other reason.

Pickup Airmail – Airmail picked up by a passing aircraft in flight without landing.

Pioneer Flight – Flight from the period beginning with the initial experimental flights and ending with the beginning of regular air services.

Rate Change Cover – Flown cover posted on the first day of a new airmail rate.

Record Flight – Fight that sets a new record for speed, distance, altitude, or endurance.

Round Trip Cover – Cover flown both ways on a round trip without readdressing.

Souvenir – Unofficial flown cover, usually carried by pilot or crew member, or for promotional or commercial purpose.

Souvenir Historical – Flown souvenirs from important events which contributed to the development of aviation.

Survey Flight – Fight made to assess the viability of a proposed or projected commercial flight route. Flight made prior to introduction of regular service on a new route.

Treaty Acceptance – Foreign origin mail accepted for airmail service pursuant to an international treaty or agreement providing for rates and compensation.

Trial Flight – Flight made to evaluate aircraft or system, includes proving flight.

U.S. Government Flight – Airmail services conducted under federal authority by the Signal Corps of the U.S. Army, the Post Office Department, or other federal bureau in pioneering subsequent commercial airmail route within the United States.

Zeppelin – A German airship built by Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin, his company Luftschiffbau Zeppelin, or its related or successor companies. ✈



The Airpost Journal (*APJ*), an official publication of the AAMS, is a generously illustrated magazine covering a wide range of aerophilately and astrophilately.

About the Authors

Dan Barber has served the AAMS as a Director, Publication Sales Manager, Secretary, and Editor-in-Chief of the *American Air Mail Catalogue*. He is a researcher and writer, and a specialist in aviation and airline history, all airmail, and philatelic literature.

Ray Broms is editor of *The Shuttle Era* in the *Jack Knight Air Log* and editor of the *Chicago Airmail Society Bulletin*. He is an avid rocket and space post collector, and exhibitor.

Basil S. Burrell , an AAMS board member, started collecting stamps in grade school under the watchful eyes of both parents who specialized in early Great Britain. He took time off to go to school, win a war, raise a family, and retire.

Cheryl Ganz specializes in Zeppelin, airship, and balloon mail and memorabilia. She has edited *The Zeppelin Collector* for twenty years. She has been AAMS President, Awards Coordinator, Chair of the AAMS/AFA Merger Committee, and a board member of FISA.

James W. Graue is a specialist in pre-WWII German transatlantic airmail and the 1934 airmail issue of Germany. He is an exhibitor, judge, and author, as well as editor of *The Airpost Journal*.

David Hollenbaugh is a balloon and Zeppelin topical collector. He is also a hot air balloon pilot and a scoring official at national and international balloon competitions. He is a research associate at the Gimbel Aeronautical History Library at the U.S. Air Force Academy.

Jonathan L. Johnson, Jr. collects FAM 14 postal history. He has served the AAMS in many roles, including President, Sales Manager, and Chapter Coordinator.

Allen D. Jones collects pioneer U.S. airmail and airship mail. He is the author of *Aerial Mail Service, A Chronology of the Early United States Government Airmail, March–December 1918*. He has served the AAMS as Chair of the Publications Committee and Director.

Kent J. Kobersteen's exhibit of the Beacon airmail stamp has won gold and grand awards. He is a researcher, author, and member of many aerophilatelic societies.

William Kriebel is editor of *Bull's Eyes*, Journal of the Brazil Philatelic Association, and *Correio Aéreo*, a feature in the *Jack Knight Air Log*. He has authored articles and a book on Brazil airmail, as well as exhibited.

Robert E. Lana is a former AAMS President and Awards Coordinator, currently serving as Publications Chair. He is an author and exhibitor of Italian Airmail, and wrote *The Mass Flights of Italo Balbo*.

Philip R. McCarty has collected, exhibited, and researched crash covers for more than twenty years. He has been an AAMS Director, Vice President, Convention Coordinator, and Chair of the Crash Cover Committee.

Stephen Neulander is editor of the *Jack Knight Air Log* and president of the Jack Knight Air Mail Society. He exhibits and lectures on Women in Aviation, Ballooning and Air Racing.

Robert Outlaw has been active many years on the AAMS board as a President and Director. He has been the society Merchandise Manager and worked on the publications committee. He collects first airmail issues of the world, the Beacon stamp, and crash mail.

Samuel J. Pezzillo moved from the general German collecting area to German airmails and eventually to airmail of any nation connected with transatlantic efforts; more recently airmail during WWII and covers from the Italian line LATI. He serves on the AAMS Awards Committee.

Dr. Reuben Ramkissoon is president of the astrophilatelic unit of ATA/APS and serves on the Astrophilatelic Bureau of the FIP as the representative of the APS. He is an avid collector, researcher, and exhibitor of space covers. He has authored a handbook on *How to Collect Space Covers*.

Stephen Reinhard is the AAMS Treasurer and former President. He is an accredited APS judge. He has exhibited extensively and participated in the APS World Series of Philately. He has won four Large Gold Medals internationally and is presently exhibiting in the FIP Championship Class.

Greg Schmidt has served the AAMS as President and Publications Sales Manager. He is a collector, author, and exhibitor of Pan American Airways Pacific operations, including naval forerunners, from 1925-1941.

Simine Short is an aerophilatelic researcher and collector of glider flown mail. She wrote *Glider Mail, an Aerophilatelic Handbook*. Her Glider Mail exhibit has garnered gold medals and research awards. She was an AAMS secretary.

Sanford Solarz's background is in advertising and aeronautical engineering. He worked for a company whose president flew a Bleriot in the pre-WWI era. His Bleriot collection has been exhibited nationally. He is advertising manager of *The Airpost Journal*.

Robert Spooner collects, exhibits, writes, and talks about U.S. and Latin American airmails, as well as Lindbergh. He has served the AAMS in many capacities, including Publicity Director.

Wayne Whitlow has serviced his own airmail covers for over 35 years. He is editor of the FFUS Section of the *American Air Mail Catalogue* and an avid airline enthusiast. He has been instrumental in computerizing the *AAMC*.

Bob Wilcsek collects Zeppelin posts, transpacific flights, Mexican airmail, and pre-WWII commercial airmail to and from Asia and the Western Pacific. He has written articles for various aerophilatelic journals. ✈

"Each pathway in Philately is attractive to someone..Let us be tolerant of his views.. let him be tolerant of ours"

JACK KNIGHT AIR LOG

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Welcome to the AAMS

The Board of Directors of the American Air Mail Society approved granting AAMS membership to all *Jack Knight Air Log* individual subscribers, effective January 1, 1996. AAMS membership benefits include voting and bidding in autions. Dues will be billed directly at the appropriate time. Subscriptions will be limited to organiztions and libraries. Welcome to the AAMS!



In the early days of aviation, advertising found a way to take advantage of the excitement it created for the average citizen.

The *Jack Knight Air Log* (*JKAL*), an official publication of the AAMS, features reports and research by various airmail specialty groups.

The American Air Mail Society

The American Air Mail Society, organized in 1923, is one of the oldest and largest aerophilatelic societies in existence. The dues are as low as possible; privileges and services to members are many. It is not necessary that a person be an advanced collector or a wealthy specialist to attain membership – or to enjoy aerophilately to its fullest extent. The only requisite is a good character and air mail collecting as a genuine interest. AAMS members feel it is a genuine honor and privilege to be affiliated together, and many members gather together often at stamp shows. Many of aerophilately's most successful exhibitors, judges, writers, and editors belong to the AAMS. The AAMS has members in many countries throughout the world.

The Airpost Journal (*APJ*) has been supported and published by the AAMS since October 1931. The *APJ* is a generously illustrated magazine covering a wide range of aerophilately. AAMS news appears regularly to keep members apprised of the organization.

Feature articles, written by leading scholars in each field, are published each month covering areas of worldwide interest. Regular columns of a continuing interest include areas such as astrophilately, air postal stationery, auction results, first flight cover news, new airmail stamp issues, show news, Zeppelin posts, book reviews, and members exchange ads.

Through *APJ* advertisements, collectors can find reliable dealers who can be most helpful in adding new stamps or covers to their collections and in keeping them in touch with current market trends.

The *Jack Knight Air Log* (*JKAL*) became an AAMS publication after the 1995 merger of the AAMS and the Aerophilatelic Federation of the Americas. This diverse 100-page publication includes an auction of airmail material, reports and research studies by various airmail specialty groups, and member exchange ads. AAMS study units on Canadian Air Mails, Lindbergh, 1934 Emergency Air Mail, Pan American Airlines, Rocket Mail, and Zeppelin posts publish regular sections in the *JKAL*.

The AAMS is one of the world's largest and most successful publishers of airmail literature. The *American Air Mail Catalogue* (*AAMC*) has been published since 1935. Other AAMS handbooks and monographs treat a variety of specialist U.S. and foreign airmail topics, from pioneer airmails worldwide to specialty topics. Members receive a discount on many of these handbooks. To receive a list of current publications for sale, write the AAMS Publications Sales Manager, 1978 Fox Burrow Court, Neenah WI 54956.

AAMS members may buy and sell material through the sales department or society auctions. Exchanges with other members may be arranged through exchange ads in the two publications.

Over twenty AAMS chapters and study units offer members a chance to interact either by mail or at regular meetings held throughout the United States. Affiliation with the APS and FISA allows members to exchange ideas at shows in the United States and in other countries.

AAMS researchers may use the translation service or access materials from the American Philatelic Research Library, P.O. Box 8338, State College PA 16801.

The AAMS sponsors many awards for exhibits of airmail stamps and covers at local, regional, national, and international stamp shows. Certificates, medals, and special attractive awards are presented to airmail exhibitors. The AAMS also recognizes the literature of aerophilately with regular awards and sponsors the internationally recognized Aerophilatelic Hall of Fame awards.

With two national meetings per year, one its annual convention, the AAMS makes it possible for members and friends to meet each year in different parts of the United States. For three days or more the subject is always airmail stamps and covers, as well as the plans and progress of the AAMS itself. Please join with us to bring airmail into the 21st century as a continuing, exciting hobby!

For a membership application, write to:
The American Air Mail Society
P.O. Box 110
Mineola NY 11501-0110. ✈

Back cover:
First day of issue cancellations from AAMS conventions for airmail issues in the United States.

Collecting Airmail

An American Air Mail Society membership offers many activities and benefits:

- ✓ *The Airpost Journal* monthly
- ✓ *Jack Knight Air Log* quarterly
- ✓ American Air Mail Catalogues
- ✓ Books and Monographs
- ✓ Sales Department
- ✓ Club auctions
- ✓ Free want and exchange ads
- ✓ Local chapter meetings
- ✓ National study units
- ✓ American Philatelic Society affiliate
- ✓ International Federation of Aerophilatelic Societies member
- ✓ Translation service
- ✓ Conventions and meetings

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